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[How to Guides](#)**White House Names Local 'Champions of Change'**

Nigel Jacob and Chris Osgood, co-chairs, Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics, Boston. Photo by David Kidd

The officials were named "Local Innovation Champions of Change" through a White House program that recognizes innovators in various sectors of the economy. Award recipients worked to build a better future for their citizens, create jobs in their community, and ensure more efficient and effective government by making information and public data more accessible, the White House said.

The 13 Local Innovation Champions of Change are:

[**Sponsored Paper:** [The New Information Democracy](#)]

- Phil Bertolini, CIO and deputy county executive, [Oakland County, Mich.](#)
- Mary Bunting, city manager, Hampton, Va.
- Adel Ebeid, chief innovation officer, Philadelphia
- Michael Flowers, analytics director, New York City
- Carolyn Hogg, CIO, Fresno, Calif.
- [Michele Hovet](#), deputy city manager, Arvada, Colo.
- [Nigel Jacob and Chris Osgood](#), co-chairs, Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics, Boston
- Doug Matthews, chief communications director, Austin, Texas
- Jay Nath, chief innovation officer, San Francisco
- [John Tolva](#), CTO, Chicago
- Ted Smith, chief of economic growth & innovation, Louisville Metro Government, Kentucky
- Rob White, director of economic development, Livermore, Calif.

Thanks to their work, citizens nationwide have access to a more transparent government, more opportunities for participation in the activities of their city or county, and tools that catalyze new types of collaboration between the public, private, nonprofit, and citizen sectors of the local community, according to the White House.

Oakland County's Bertolini has been a leader in shared services, helping other jurisdictions combine forces to gain efficiency and save money. With the backing of County Executive L. Brooks Patterson, he launched G2G Government Solutions, a platform for sharing applications used by many local jurisdictions. In addition, the Michigan county is hosting an "App Store" for the National Association of Counties.

"This recognition belongs to the entire team at Oakland County," said Bertolini. "I have been given an incredible opportunity to lead a very talented IT team and to have incredible executive sponsorship from our county executive, L. Brooks Patterson. Having our county recognized by the White House proves that our efforts are not going unnoticed. We are proud of our accomplishments and we thank the White House for the recognition."

Livermore's White is Interim CEO of the i-GATE Innovation Hub, a broad partnership focused on using Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories to boost the regional economy. He was nominated by Livermore Mayor John Marchand.

"For me, this is a lot of validation for about three years' worth of effort on pulling together a serious consortium — 'super regional' is the way we put it — spanning four counties across California, in the east [San Francisco] bay and Sacramento areas," White said,

September 21, 2012 By
[Jessica Mulholland](#), [Wayne Hanson](#)

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noting that the other 12 winners are located in large cities. "Livermore is a city of 80,000, by far the smallest of all the cities on the list, and to be recognized at that level for the efforts we've been working on in conjunction with the two national labs is just absolute validation."

Fresno's Carolyn Hogg and her team are working to [bring wireless broadband to the San Joaquin Valley](#), which will be used for smarter farming, distance learning, telehealth, and sharing of open data and common applications used among all municipalities throughout the region.

"I'm so proud that the nation is recognizing what [California's] Central Valley does, and how it impacts the world," Hogg said. "We feed a third of the world and we are going to maximize the use of technology to stimulate our local economy as well."

In Boston, Osgood noted that the Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics achieves all of its work through partnerships. "This award should be seen as a recognition of all that is happening in Boston to make the city even better -- from Mayor [Thomas] Menino, to city staff, to city residents," he said.

And in Hampton, Va., Bunting said she's overwhelmed by the recognition for the city's citizen engagement around its budget process. "It's very exciting, and I'm very humbled," she said, "but I do feel it's a recognition not just of me but of all the efforts my community has done together."

Hampton city government has connected residents and started incorporating their voices early in the budget process by using various types of technology, such as social media and online chats. "It honestly wouldn't be receiving recognition if the Hampton residents hadn't embraced it in such a way, to come out and participate and make their voices heard and take advantage of these new technologies," Bunting said. "So certainly the organization has offered those [technologies], but the residents have availed themselves to them."

In Arvada, Colo., Hovet said she's excited about the honor, and is looking forward to bringing more attention to innovative local programs. "Innovation at the local level is important because that's where there's enough flexibility; I think we're more agile to get data out, to coordinate communities of people, to create hackathons and those types of things," she said. "I think it's important for local governments to capitalize on the trends and innovation happening with transparency and mobility and smartphones, and all the things that are in people's hands."

For Livermore's White, local innovation is "how we are going to change the way we as local governments start to interact and react to the issues that have come upon us from the economy," he said. "And it's not just tech innovation. Some of the winners on the list have come up with new software technologies to help with services, but it's also about creating partnerships to expand the financial resources far beyond what any one city could have done. I think that really being able to do that service delivery for the future, we have to start becoming innovative. I like to use the words 'municipal entrepreneurs.'"

As for Boston's Osgood, many of the greatest opportunities for civic innovation stem from increased collaboration between residents and government. "That is often most feasible at the local level," he said, "where challenges are often tangible and immediate, and collaboration can be fostered quickly and more easily."

The Champions of Change program was created as a part of President Obama's Winning the Future initiative. Each week, a different sector is highlighted and groups of champions, ranging from educators to entrepreneurs to community leaders, are recognized for the work they are doing to serve and strengthen their communities. In 2011, [16 open data developers](#) were recognized as Champions of Change.

All 13 Champions of Change will tell their stories on Tuesday Sept. 25 using the "Ignite" format, a five-minute speaking presentation backed up with 20 slides set to 15-second intervals. Afterward, said Hogg, each presenter will meet with high-profile organizations who will offer recommendations on moving projects forward and sustaining them.

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Dave in NC | Commented 3 Days Ago

My sense is that there's a bandwagon rolling and lots of folks clambering aboard. While open government is probably a good thing, I have to wonder if anyone has thought it through? Can we assume access to everything is a good thing, always, and what is the negative? There's always the law of unintended consequence to consider, and for every positive, there's a negative. For example, do these open government initiatives favor the 'pod-ers over the less techno-geeks? Does having the mobile app and direct link to government officials tilt the balance of influence to a special constituency, leaving the masses to letter writing and terminal response? How instant communication managed with constituents managed by government,

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and what impact does it have on efficiency and effectiveness overall. Just saying, are we looking at both sides of this coin or just pumping technology?

Kristin Judge | Commented 3 Days Ago

It is wonderful to see Phil Bertolini being recognized for his work. There are few more dedicated to service and innovation in government.

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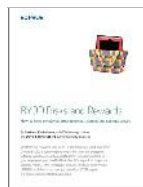
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